

This listing of Claims will replace all prior versions and listings of Claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-24 (Cancelled)

Claim 25 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid encoding a polypeptide which stimulates release of proteoglycans from cartilage tissue and having at least 95% nucleic acid sequence identity to:

- (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2);
- (b) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2), lacking its associated signal peptide;
- (c) the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1);
- (d) the full-length coding sequence of the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1); or
- (e) the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 209526.

Claim 26 (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid of Claim 25 encoding a polypeptide which stimulates release of proteoglycans from cartilage tissue and having at least 99% nucleic acid sequence identity to:

- (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2);
- (b) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2), lacking its associated signal peptide;
- (c) the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1);
- (d) the full-length coding sequence of the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1); or
- (e) the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 209526.

Claim 27 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid comprising:

- (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2);
- (b) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2), lacking its associated signal peptide;
- (c) the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1);
- (d) the full-length coding sequence of the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1); or
- (e) the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 209526.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2).

Claim 29 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2), lacking its associated signal peptide.

Claims 30-31 (Cancelled)

Claim 32 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid comprising the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1).

Claim 33 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid comprising the full-length coding sequence of the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1).

Claim 34 (Previously Presented) An isolated nucleic acid comprising the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 209526.

Claim 35 (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid that hybridizes under high stringency conditions to:

- (a) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2);

- (b) a nucleic acid sequence encoding the polypeptide shown in Figure 2 (SEQ ID NO:2), lacking its associated signal peptide;
- (c) the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1);
- (d) the full-length coding sequence of the nucleic acid sequence shown in Figure 1 (SEQ ID NO:1); or
- (e) the full-length coding sequence of the cDNA deposited under ATCC accession number 209526

wherein said isolated nucleic acid encodes a polypeptide which stimulates release of proteoglycans from cartilage tissue.

Claim 36 (Currently Amended) The isolated nucleic acid of Claim 35, wherein said hybridization occurs under high stringency conditions ~~selected from the group consisting of~~ comprising:

~~(a) 0.015 M sodium chloride/0.0015 M sodium citrate/0.1% sodium dodecyl sulfate at 50°C;~~

~~(b) 50% (v/v) formamide with 0.1% bovine serum albumin/0.1% Ficoll/0.1% polyvinylpyrrolidone/50mM sodium phosphate buffer at pH 6.5 with 750 mM sodium chloride, 75 mM sodium citrate at 42°C; and~~

~~(c) 50% formamide, 5 x SSC (0.75 M sodium chloride, 0.075 M sodium citrate), 50 mM sodium phosphate (pH 6.8), 0.1% sodium pyrophosphate, 5 x Denhardt's solution, sonicated salmon sperm DNA (50 µg/ml), 0.1% sodium dodecyl sulphate, and 10% dextran sulfate at 42°C, with washes at 42°C in 0.2 x SSC (0.75 M sodium chloride, 0.075 M sodium citrate) and 50% formamide at 55°C, followed by a high-stringency wash consisting of 0.1 x SSC (0.75 M sodium chloride, 0.075 N sodium citrate) containing EDTA at 55°C.~~

Claim 37 (Previously Presented) The isolated nucleic acid of Claim 35 which is at least 35 nucleotides in length.

Claim 38 (Previously Presented) An isolated vector comprising the nucleic acid of Claim 25.

Claim 39 (Previously Presented) The isolated vector of Claim 38, wherein said nucleic acid is operably linked to control sequences recognized by a host cell transformed with the vector.

Claim 40 (Previously Presented) An isolated host cell comprising the vector of Claim 38.

Claim 41 (Previously Presented) The isolated host cell of Claim 40, wherein said cell is a CHO cell, an *E. coli* or a yeast cell.

Claim 42 (Currently Amended) An isolated nucleic acid comprising a sequence that encodes a polypeptide of SEQ ID NO:2 with 0-20 conservative amino acid substitutions, wherein the polypeptide stimulates release of proteoglycans from cartilage.

Claim 43 (Cancelled)